(b) if not, the assessment of Government in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that such weavers have demanded from Government to formulate a separate handloom policy; and

(d) if so, the decision taken by Government on the said demand ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) As per the Handloom Census 1995-96 results, 25.2 lakhs households in the Country were engaged in handloom related activities. Handloom Sector is an integral part of the textile sector and the intererests of the handloom weavers would be taken care of while finalising the New Textile Policy.

Modernisation of Textile Mills

2286. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to modernise the textile mills functioning in the country;

(b) if so, the names of such textile mills, district-wise; and

(c) the details of funds allocated for the purpose by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) The Government of India, Ministry of Textiles has launched a Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) for Textile and Jute Industries which is in operation since 01.04.1999 for a period of 5 years, i.e., up to 31.03.2004. Any eligible textile/jute unit can avail of funds within the framework of the aforesaid scheme and normal financial norms of the concerned financial institution/bank. It is an open-ended scheme depending on the capacity of the industry to absorb funds in bankable and techno-economically feasible proposals. Government funding is limited to reimbursement of interest at 5% point on the interest charged by the lending agency on a porject of technology upgradation in conformity with the scheme.

Unaudited Accounts of NTC Mills

†2287. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the accounts of National Textile Corporation Mills (NTC) and its subordinate textile mills have not been audited for the last several years;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.